

A REVIEW: ROLE OF YOGA AND PHYSICAL EXERCISE IN LIFESTYLE DISORDERS – OBESITY

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ABSTRACT

Overweight and obesity are rapidly increasing in countries like India. WHO guidelines were used to define overweight- BMI $>23\text{kg/m}^2$ but $<25\text{kg/m}^2$, generalized obesity $>25\text{kg/m}^2$. The simplest explanation for obesity is based on food intake i.e. intake of high calories and wrong life style i.e. no exercise or work to burn enough calories. Because of these reasons excess calories get converted to body fat. The central or general obesity is one of the cause for life style disorders like DM, Hypertension and cardiac diseases. *Yogic* management plays preventive as well as curative role in the management of Obesity. It is based on controlled and balanced diet, yoga postures or *Asanas* and breathing techniques. Pranayama, Yoga Asnas and physical exercises can give relief to obese people and can prevent the overweight people

from obesity and its related metabolic diseases.

KEYWORDS: Obesity, BMI, Yoga, Physical exercises.

INTRODUCTION

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), Obesity is one of the most common, public health problems in both developed and developing countries. Worldwide, 2.8 million people die each year as a result of being overweight or obese, and an estimated 35.8 million (2.3%) The growing rate of obesity. Overweight and obesity lead to adverse metabolic effects

on blood pressure, cholesterol, triglycerides and insulin resistance in India is making India an unhealthy nation, as Indians become increasingly affected by many obesity related problems such as diabetes, hypertension, heart disease etc. Mortality rates increase with increasing degrees of overweight, as measured by body mass index. To achieve optimum health, the median body mass index for an adult in the range 18.5 to 24.9 kg/m².

The prevalence of obesity were highest in the WHO Regions of the Americas (62% for overweight in both sexes). In all WHO Regions women were more likely to be obese than men. The prevalence of raised BMI increases with income level of countries up to upper middle income levels.

Population should be in range of 21 to 23 kg/m², while the goal for individuals should be to maintain BMI Causes of rising obesity in India includes eating habits, fast foods, lack of physical activity, lack of awareness, etc. Health education, life-style or behaviour modification i.e. changing eating habits, increasing physical activity, exercise, dietary habits, behaviour modification, *Yoga sadhana* play the preventive as well as therapeutic part in the management of Obesity. Obesity is a condition in which a person has excess of body fat that could impair health. Obesity increases an individual's risk for various diseases, disabilities and death.

The conscious effort to alter diet habits and changed lifestyle by Yoga and physical exercises are the best methods to manage obesity. *Yogic* management is based on controlled and balanced diet, Yoga postures or *Asanas* and breathing techniques. Consuming only the amount of food that we really need, along with regular exercise, performing Shatkriya, pranayama and *Yoga Asnas* can give relief to overweight and obese people.

As the prevalence of obesity all over the world is rising day by day, it is necessary to find out the ways to deal with it and its the related complications. Yoga and life style management is one of the best ways to treat the obesity as well as to keep a healthy person fit and away from being overweight.

AIM: Role of Yoga and Physical Exercise in Life- style disorders- OBESITY: A Review.

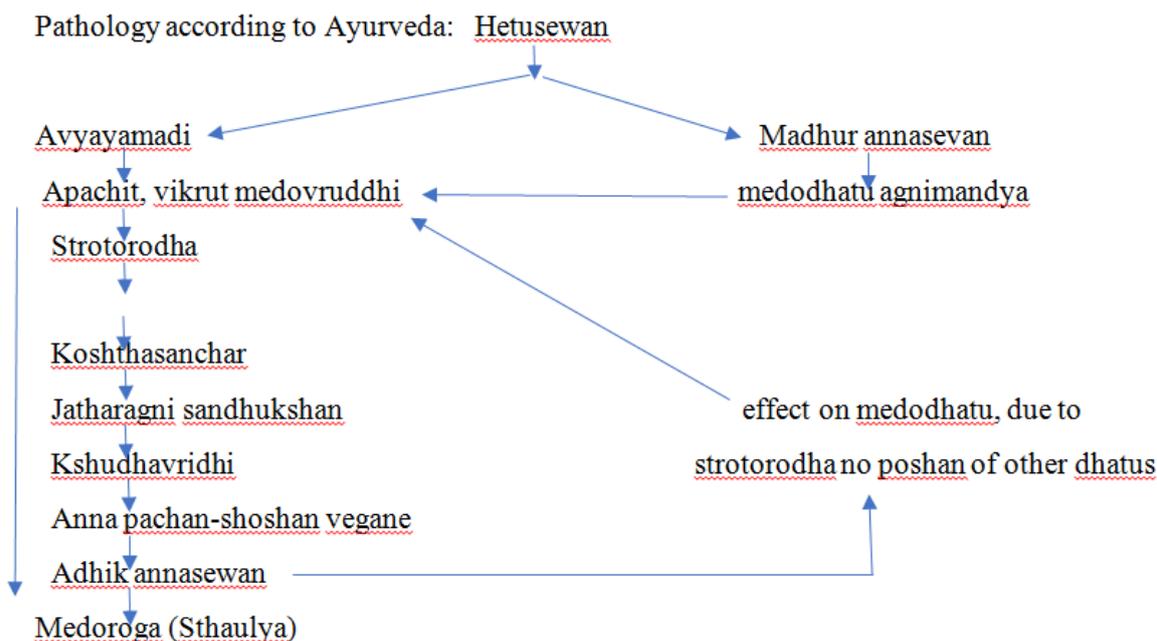
OBJECTIVES: 1) Review of obesity from Ayurvedic and modern texts.

2) Role of Yoga and physical exercises in the management of Obesity.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Review of Literature

According to Ayurveda, *Sthaulya* (Obesity) is explained under by Charaka. The causes of obesity explained by Charaka in *Sutrasthana* and *Vimansthana* are *Guru* (heavy), *Madhur* (sweet), *sheeta* (cool), *snigdha* (oily) *ahar sewan* in excess quantity; *Avyayam* (no exercise), *Achinta* (no any kind of stress), *divaswap* (day time sleep), *beejswabhav* (genetic).



Chikitsa according to Charakacharya: In *Sutrasthana* charaka said that, “*Guru ch apatarpanam sreshtham sthulanam karshanam prati*”. As *Sthaulya* is caused due to *atitarpan*, the chikitsa should be based on *Karshaniya* and *apatarpanatmak* chikitsa.

Yoga in Obesity: Yoga begins by working with the body on a structural level and the *Yogic* practices balance all the system of the body. Yoga practices produce an increase in the lean body mass and decrease in the body fat percent. This leads to an improvement in central and generalized obesity.

In yoga therapy, we do not exercise body for the sake of burning extra calories, but to develop body awareness, the way it works and what suits it best. The aim of yoga is not just reduction of weight, this is bound to happen as an outcome of our increased self awareness. The best *Asnas* for obesity are the *Pawanmuktasana* for the digestive system which help to remove extra fat from the abdomen, hips and thighs, and activate the energy in the lower panic centers. These include: *Uttanpadasana* (raised leg position), *Chakrapadasana* (leg

rotation), *Pada sanchalana* (cycling) and *Naukasana* (boat pose). These practices are very good for strengthening the abdominal muscles which are very flaccid in the obese patient. It also helps burn the extra fat tissue of the omentum which is a fold of peritoneum, in the abdomen, very rich in fat tissue.

Vajrasana: From the *Vajrasana* series, some *Asnas* are helpful such as *Vajrasana* (thunderbolt pose) itself, *Marjarasana* (cat-stretch pose), *Vyaghrasana* (tiger pose), *Shashankasana* (pose of moon), *Ushtrasana* (camel pose), all of which are very powerful for toning the sexual organs and balancing the sexual energy which is often depleted in obese individual. They also help to strengthen the digestive and endocrine system.

Sitting position *Asnas*: *Ardhamatsyendrasana*, *Paschimottanasana* are also very effective in the Obesity. As these Stretches the abdominal muscles and works on the *Agni*. *Agnimandya* is the main cause of obesity. The above *Asnas* helps to normalize the *Agni*. It helps to break the pathology.

Suryanamaskara: The dynamic series *Suryanamaskara* (salutation to the sun) is most important for the treatment of obesity. *Surya Namaskara* is a complete practice in itself because it includes *Asana*, *Pranayama*, *Mantra* and meditation. This practice has a unique influence on the endocrine and nervous system, helping to correct metabolic imbalances that cause and perpetuate obesity.

Pranayama: The *Pranayama* practices recommended for obesity are also the more dynamic forms which stimulate the metabolism. These include: *Bhastrika*, *Kapalbhati*, *Suryabhedha* which are performed along with balancing practices like *Nadishodhan* and *Ujjayi*. *Sheetali* and *Sheetkari* are relaxing, cooling practices which influence different hypothalamic centres which give control over thirst and feeling of satisfaction with healthy quantities and qualities of food.

Shatkarmas: The other *Hatha yoga* practices which are most helpful in obesity are the *Shatkarmas* or internal cleansing techniques.

The changes which we make in our behaviour, habits and lifestyle, can never be maintained unless they are supported by the realization of what our real needs, strengths and weaknesses are. This will help us to develop greater self- confidence, and the changes thus implemented will last lifelong.

In the *Hathayoga Samhita*, under the *Asnayas* the terms came eg. '*Matsyendrapitham jatharpradiptam*' and '*udayam jatharanilasya kuryadudare karshyam arogata.*'

Daily Practice Programs

No.	Asana	Duration in minutes
1.	Shithilikaran kriya	5
2.	Omkar chanting	5
3.	Suryanamaskara (30 repetitions)	8-10
4.	Dhanurasana	2
5.	Bhujangasana	2
6.	Ushtrasana	2
7.	Ardhamatsyendrasana	2
8.	Paschimottanasana	2
9.	Halasana	3
10.	Shavasana	2

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